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ABSTRACT

A vision of the new California high school is presented in this document, which outlines the principles of school reform. The key to successful restructuring lies in developing a comprehensive reform statement based on the following components: creating curricular paths to success; developing powerful teaching and learning; establishing a comprehensive accountability and assessment system; providing comprehensive support for all students, including language-minority students and those at risk of failure; restructuring the school; and creating new professional roles. Each of the components is detailed in individual chapters. Recommendations are made to generate investment and to develop new attitudes that focus on student learning outcomes. Information about the California High School Task Force is included. (Contains 68 references.) (LMI)

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SECOND TO NONE

A VISION OF THE NEW CALIFORNIA HIGH SCHOOL

THE REPORT OF THE
CALIFORNIA HIGH SCHOOL
TASK FORCE

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THE REPORT OF THE CALIFORNIA HIGH SCHOOL TASK FORCE

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FOREWORD

As we approach the twenty-first century, more students than ever before need to be educated to higher levels so that they can (1) compete successfully in the increasingly technological job market; (2) participate in our democratic system; and (3) develop strong moral and ethical values and the ability to reach their individual potential. Schools must prepare students who know how to think and to learn; who know how to gather, organize, and analyze information and then apply it to solving a problem; and who can work collaboratively with others. In California we have embodied these objectives in our state curriculum frameworks, which call for a more demanding curriculum. However, it has become increasingly obvious that if we are to succeed in helping youngsters reach these higher performance levels, we must make major changes in the organization and delivery of our instructional program.

Our schools were originally designed to meet the needs of a rural, agrarian society. Gradually, they adapted to the needs of an urban, industrial society. Now, high schools must enter the next stage of improvement activities and shift to an outcome-based approach to meet the challenges of an information- and knowledge-based, global society in the twenty-first century. To help our high schools make that shift, we need to rethink many of our traditional high school approaches—building on what works and discarding what does not. We must strengthen the quality of our high schools, and this means radically changing the way they do business.

Specifically, we have to provide each student with a focused course of study and eliminate the weak, general education or "shopping mall" curriculum. We need to engage our students in a strengthened curriculum; prepare more students for college and also prepare students to qualify for technical preparation programs and jobs; develop outcome-based accountability; provide effective support and reduce the dropout rate; establish an environment of professionalism for school faculty; initiate effective parent, business, and community involvement; and make instructional and organizational changes to allow students to reach these higher levels.

We must ensure that all students' courses of study match their aspirations and that each student has an effective, challenging educational program. According to a California Department of Education 1990 report, the courses

students are taking too often do not relate to their aspirations; 48 percent of tenth graders were enrolled in general education courses, but their career goals required a college degree. To connect more students to higher level learning experiences, this report, *Second to None: A Vision of the New California High School*, calls for a strong academic foundation in the first two years of high school and demanding, yet flexible, program majors for students in grades eleven and twelve.

Fortunately, the first steps have already been taken in this reform effort. State educators and their supporting communities have reached a consensus on California's educational goals. These goals, once controversial and widely debated, are now generally accepted as the foundation of our efforts. We began with the premise that more of our students must be educated to higher levels than ever before. At least 25 percent of those in the state's high school graduating classes should earn bachelor's degrees (which means that a substantially higher percent must enter college); another 25 percent should earn associate degrees or equivalent degrees from a community college; and at least 40 percent should make a successful transition from school to work after graduating, reducing the dropout rate to under 10 percent.

IMPROVEMENT IS ALREADY UNDER WAY AT HIGH SCHOOLS.

To meet these goals, many California high schools have been part of a creative surge of improvement activities during the last decade. Tremendous efforts are now under way to upgrade the quality of education in this state, and this hard work on the part of high school educators is beginning to show results. The dropout rate is falling, the number of students enrolling in college is increasing, and test scores and the number of students taking rigorous courses are rising. For instance, in 1990 the average senior was about one year ahead of his or her counterpart in 1984 on California Assessment Program tests, registering a gain of 0.6 year in reading and 1.25 years in math.

In addition, innovative and effective efforts signaling change already exist in many of California's approximately 800 public comprehensive high schools, and some schools have several initiatives operating. These initiatives are often still evolving, as the participants continue to figure out what works best to improve student performance.

The following are examples of state-local high school partnerships that are successfully under way: 71 high schools have received restructuring planning grants under the Demonstration of Restructuring in Public Education program; 30 High School Investment Schools have been awarded grants to improve their transition-to-work programs, linking career-vocational

education and academics; 50 received funds to create California Partnership Academies; 108 have revamped their science programs in Scope, Sequence, and Coordination projects; over 200 have introduced Math A; 140 are preparing more minority and low-income youngsters to attend college through the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program; 50 have dropout programs under the School-based Pupil Motivation and Maintenance Program; 26 schools offer International Baccalaureate programs; more than 400 are participating in 2 + 2 articulation projects, linking the last two years of high school with community college; ten are attempting to improve overall student performance through the California Local Educational Reform Network (C-LERN); and another ten are coordinating services for students at risk in the Every Student Succeeds program. In addition, scores of magnet schools and locally initiated, innovative programs are in place, as well as national initiatives, such as the Coalition of Essential Schools.

These gains were made during a time of dwindling resources for education and despite enormous challenges facing schools. For example, 20 percent of California's high school students are living in poverty, and 18 percent are limited-English proficient; 10 to 25 percent of our teens are considered at risk because of recurring drug or alcohol use; and the state's adolescent pregnancy rate is second highest in the nation.

However, while performance has risen, it is not nearly enough for the changing realities of the twenty-first century. American students still rank near the bottom on most international tests; and employers and college faculty complain about the low mathematical, scientific, and cultural literacy of entry-level students.

THE COMPONENTS OF COMPREHENSIVE REFORM MUST BE INTEGRATED.

If we have learned anything about educational reform during the decade of the 1980s, it has been that single initiatives cannot simply operate in isolation. They must be part of a comprehensive reform strategy. We have a good idea of what components are necessary for this complex undertaking to work, and we have a growing understanding that these disparate efforts must be incorporated into an orchestrated approach at each high school. In addition, there is an increased awareness that students will have to work harder to reach the performance levels necessary for success and that the instructional program should require them to do more work in school that relates to the world beyond school.

This report describes a vision of the new California high school. Every school must work on doing something about *each* of the following components—not just one or two—and link them in an integrated fashion if

our high schools are to successfully raise students' performance levels. The key is a comprehensive reform strategy in each school based on these ideas:

- ***Creating curricular paths to success.*** The high school curriculum is reorganized to connect more students with higher level learning opportunities that lead to postsecondary and career goals. All students in grades nine and ten participate in an academic foundation which provides a strong core curriculum. This curriculum integrates themes and concepts both within and across disciplines. It engages students in the learning process so that they are active participants who can apply their knowledge to other areas of learning. All students are expected to be successful within this concept-driven curriculum, and they are given the necessary support to do so. While all students study the same curriculum, different students may be in different places in the course sequence for some subjects, and students who meet high performance standards more quickly move on.

  In grades eleven and twelve, students choose a program major in which academic, applied academic, and field experiences are organized around a special focus; and all students continue to take a core curriculum. Program majors can be organized around career fields, such as health; or integrated academic disciplines, such as humanities. Many program majors are designed to prepare students to meet college entrance requirements, while also providing students with career-related technical and practical skills. Every student has a personal learning plan that acts as a road map, guiding him or her through the academic foundation and program majors and on to postsecondary education or the work force. To implement this curricular change, the educational community needs to work on transition strategies with business and postsecondary education, on support strategies with local communities, and on involvement strategies with parents.

- ***Developing powerful teaching and learning.*** A more diverse mix of students study the same higher level curriculum, and performance levels are established that require a more intense level of individual effort. Teachers redesign traditional courses to provide learning opportunities that cause students to formulate and solve problems; criticize their own work; work in teams; communicate about what they are doing; and achieve mastery of a topic, skill, or craft. These powerful learning experiences are linked to standards, and students know beforehand the standards they must attain for each unit of study. Teachers support students in achieving the quality standards by guiding

and coaching students individually or in small collaborative groups working on the same project or unit.

- ***Establishing a comprehensive accountability and assessment system.*** The accountability and assessment system supports student learning and measures students' success in meeting quality standards that are consistent with a rigorous, concept-driven curriculum. The system allows the school to assess a student's thought and problem-solving processes, as well as to determine how well it is meeting students' educational needs. Assessment emphasizes performance and application of knowledge. The system is relevant and motivates students. Teachers use performance standards to guide their instruction and judge their effectiveness. Students have graduation portfolios that reflect what they know and can do.
- ***Providing comprehensive support for all students, including language-minority students and those at risk of failure.*** Integrated student support is an organized system of helping youngsters early—before problems develop. Support is designed so that all students can gain the knowledge and skills to achieve in the rigorous curriculum. They also receive support to surmount problems associated with physical, social, health, or psychological needs. Students are connected to the school and, thus, to a wide range of integrated resources that can assist them in reaching their goals. Students from non-English-speaking backgrounds receive support that enables them to acquire English fully. The school ensures that language minority students receive all course content required for grade level promotion, graduation, and for successful transition to postsecondary education or the work force.
- ***Restructuring the school.*** The school's organization changes. Schools build their capacity to solve problems; improve quality; and make students feel connected academically, socially, and emotionally to other students and adults. For example, four or five teachers may be responsible for working closely with the same group of students, or students are grouped by houses or clusters.
- ***Creating new professional roles.*** Teachers and principals have broader roles than they currently do. For example, a math teacher still teaches math but may also be a member of a team that is responsible for providing support to a group of students in a cluster or program major. In addition, the teacher is a member of the faculty, contributing to the organized effort to improve the school's quality. Teachers are supported with time and resources for planning and professional development to

enable them to offer students a redesigned higher level curriculum. District office administrators and school board members support and collaborate with site administrators and staff to create an environment of professionalism. Decision making becomes increasingly decentralized, and school staff is accountable for results.

INITIATING CHANGE IS DIFFICULT.

This effort is a tall order. Initiating change is difficult. There will be many false starts, and schools will constantly make adjustments as they discover better ways to improve student performance. In addition, there is no single "correct" way of redesigning a high school. Rather, every school must raise and address a set of crucial issues, ideas, and questions. Each of these issues will be solved differently by different schools. The result will be high schools that are totally unlike today's schools.

Given the complicated nature of high schools, it is also important to recognize that not all of these crucial issues can be addressed at once. No single, quick fix will do the job. Because of the complexity of the reforms and their radical nature, it will take at least five to ten years to implement these ideas fully and see results in our schools.

In addition, this report's ideas need to be read carefully, because most of them are complicated and are open to misinterpretation. The report looks at new ways of organizing classrooms and educational experiences, with the limitation of using existing language and old terminology. For example, the report does not support tracking students when it describes program majors for grades eleven and twelve. The intent is just the opposite—it calls for all students to participate in a higher level curriculum than ever before. Students select programs based on their own interests and learning styles; and, as a result, a whole spectrum of opportunities opens up for them.

RADICAL REFORM REQUIRES INVESTMENT.

Finally, it is important to remember that redesigning California high schools is a long-range effort, and this is the year that we start. An underlying premise of this initiative is that it will require investment—both a better use of current funding and additional funding to develop and implement critical aspects of the vision. Many of this report's recommendations require more funds than are currently available, yet the lack of these supplemental resources cannot be accepted as an excuse for inaction.

Some recommendations require no new funds, but they call for a new attitude which focuses all existing resources and activities on student learning outcomes. For example, concentrating more on student engagement, integrating subject-matter instruction, and revising master schedules to reflect student needs will naturally result in the more effective use of existing resources and facilities.

Many ideas presented here will be implemented more quickly with additional funds. The depth, quality, and variety of new courses linked to specific career fields, for instance, will develop slowly without adequate resources for the staff time needed to plan and carry out designing such courses.

Other key recommendations will not become reality without additional funding. A longer contract year to support planning, curriculum design, and staff development is an obvious example. Providing more intensive student guidance, developing meaningful assessment, and coordinating the social services network that serves students and their families will all require additional resources.

Second to None: A Vision of the New California High School describes an exciting vision and issues a challenge to every California high school to join in making our high schools and each of our students second to none.

Bill Honig

State Superintendent of Public Instruction

ABOUT THE TASK FORCE

This report, *Second to None: A Vision of the New California High School*, comes at a very opportune time. Educators all across the state are ready to rethink how our high schools do business and are anxious to enter the next phase of reform efforts to improve student learning. Many initiatives that are already in place are making significant advances in our schools.

While we are all only too aware of the terrible fiscal constraints being imposed on our schools, the opportunity still exists, nonetheless, to make significant changes in our schools—in part by using existing resources differently.

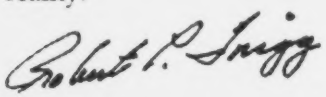
In April 1990, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction convened the California High School Task Force to provide policy direction for high school reform. To build upon the goals established during the California Education Summit in December 1989, Superintendent Honig appointed approximately 70 people to help chart a course to raise students' overall performance levels and enhance their postgraduation success. High School Task Force members included leaders in educational, business, professional, and citizen organizations. The public school sector was represented by school boards, administrators, counselors, teachers, and students.

Over the past two years, the Task Force has met to discuss a broad range of issues related to secondary education. In addition to its own deliberations, the High School Task Force reviewed research on secondary education, examined policies, and conferred with experts. The Task Force conducted 17 regional hearings throughout the state during October and November of 1990 to allow educators and the public to have input on secondary school improvement.

This report is not prescriptive. It is the first in a series of resource documents for high school reform. It outlines the principles of reform and invites all schools to consider these ideas and how to make them work at their own sites. Change will come school by school.

I greatly appreciate the work of the task force, and especially want to thank the chairs of the subcommittees: Bob Carter, Maria Casillas, Cynthia Grennan, Bill Huyett, Maggie Carrillo Mejia, and Sue Morris. They invested an incredible amount of time and energy in developing this vision of a new high

school. I could not have asked for a better group to address this task. My thanks to all who have participated in this project, and I look forward to working together as we see this vision of the new high school become a reality.



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A VISION OF THE NEW CALIFORNIA HIGH SCHOOL

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BAYSIDE HIGH SCHOOL

What follows is a vision of Bayside High School, a twenty-first century school, which has attempted to address the comprehensive nature of reform. It has integrated its activities in improving curriculum, instruction, professional development, organizational change, assessment, and accountability, while collaborating with various communities. In charting its course, Bayside ensures that all students receive a basic core curriculum and are involved in an organized program during their schooling. Students and faculty work as a team, feel good about their school, and are emotionally connected to it.

This vignette describes a portion of one student's day at Bayside High. The description is not meant to portray what every school should look like, but rather it gives an idea of how the concepts outlined in *Second to None* might be implemented in one paricular school district.

Mike rushes through the front door, hoping that he is not late. He is supposed to spend the morning in a three-hour Science 2 lab; and he knows that Maria and Sandy, his team members, will be annoyed with him if he isn't on time.

Mike is a tenth grader at Bayside High School. He is finishing up the second year of his academic foundation. As he prepares to enter eleventh grade, he is thinking about making some changes in his individual learning plan that he, his parents, and the school's staff have developed. He is reevaluating his original decision about what career path to take.

Bayside's ninth and tenth graders are divided into five clusters of approximately 200 students each. Each cluster has a team of math, science, English, social studies, and humanities teachers. Two counselors divide their time among the five clusters. A bilingual coordinator and three additional teachers also team with teachers from the clusters. In addition, each teacher functions as an adviser to a small group of students who meet daily for 20 minutes.

Mike originally chose Bayside because of its good Electronics and Technology Academy. Ever since elementary school, he has been interested in mechanical things, and he loves trying to figure out how they work. Now, however, he is beginning to think that maybe what he really wants to do is become a journalist. He knows that Lakeview High, across town, has an

excellent communications and arts program in its Humanities House; and he is considering transferring there for the eleventh grade.

"Hey, where've you been?" calls Maria, when she sees Mike enter the classroom. "I thought you forgot we wanted to get together before class."

"No," says Mike, slightly out of breath. "I didn't forget, but I was talking to the school counselor, and I lost track of the time."

"What were you talking about?" asks Sandy, somewhat skeptically.

"About what program major to take," Mike answers. "My dad and I went to a school meeting last night where they talked about next year. I've been thinking for a while that I might transfer to Lakeview to study communications. I guess my dad thinks that sounds like a good idea. It means changing my learning plan, and I don't really want to leave here, but . . . ," he says, his voice trailing off.

Maria replies, "Well, I hear they've got some awesome programs at Lakeview."

"How do you know?" Mike asks.

"My sister goes there, because she wants to go to medical school," Maria explains. "She really likes the Health Academy. She started out wanting to be a nurse, but now she thinks she might be a pediatrician. Every afternoon she goes over to Good Samaritan Hospital and gets credit for working as an assistant in the pediatrics unit. She's going to graduate in June, and you should see her portfolio. I hate to say it, but even I'm impressed. She's done some really interesting projects working in the clinics around here."

"It would be a big switch for me," says Mike. "I've always been interested in mechanics. But this year, I learned that I actually enjoy writing."

"Are you any good at it?" asks Maria.

"Yeah. I've got Mr. Williams as a teacher, and he seems to think so," answers Mike. "I hear the communications program at Lakeview lets you work at *The Register*. It might be cool to see what a newspaper's like. Plus, they put out the *Hub* on campus. I've seen it a couple of times, and it looks pretty good."

Sandy says, "Well, no way I'd leave here, because I want to go into the Environmental Resources House. But I'm worried that I won't be with my friends if they go into the other houses here. I guess some of our classes might still be the same, though. Like Science 4—kids from all the different programs take that together. And I'm still going to do soccer after school."

Maria asks, "You remember Steve?"

Mike replies, "You mean your old boyfriend?"

"Yeah, him." says Maria. "He was in the Electronics and Technology Academy. He wanted to be an auto mechanic. Now he has a great job at J & R's shop near the mall. He took a lot of computer and electronic classes,

and he did an apprenticeship at the shop before they offered him a job."

In addition to the Electronics and Technology Academy, which concentrates on math, science, and related fields, other program majors at Bayside include: the Human Services Academy for students interested in social work, psychology, law, and teaching; and the International House, with a curriculum focusing on foreign languages, world economics, and international relations.

All of the houses and academies at both schools combine academic instruction and technical training. They are designed so that students can go on to college, get advanced or specialized training, or move directly into a career in the work force. Partnerships among the schools, higher education, and local businesses and industries provide resources and input into curricular design, as well as opportunities for internships and apprenticeships. Whatever house a student is in, he or she participates in some extracurricular or community service activity related to that particular curricular path.

"Well, we gotta get back on this science project, or none of us is going anywhere," Sandy states emphatically, changing the subject. She inquires, "Did you try a computer search through the library to get us some other resources?"

"Uh-oh," Mike answers somewhat sheepishly. "I knew I forgot something. I'll do it at lunch."

Maria is a bit annoyed. "You know, on Friday, we're going to have to do a demonstration of this theory for our grade. We have to get our research straight and have our act together by then," she reminds him.

Just then Ms. Chan, the teacher, enters the room. She had spent the previous day at a staff development meeting with other district teachers talking about how to integrate the science curriculum with history and English classes. Right now all three classes are working on the theme of "Beginnings." She is looking forward to trying out some of the new techniques in her Science 2 class and sharing what she has learned with the other teachers in her cluster.

Mike makes an appointment to see Ms. Chan, who is also the teacher who advises him. He wants to tell her about his conversation with the counselor about going to Lakeside and get her opinion of the change he is considering in his plan.

Ms. Chan assures him that if he needs it, he will receive help adjusting to the Humanities House once he is there. "And," she adds, "you'll have plenty of support to get you over the rough spots."

"Okay," Mike says, "I'll give it a try. Just think—a couple of years ago I was delivering newspapers. Now maybe one day I'll be writing for them."

CREATING CURRICULAR PATHS TO SUCCESS

1

All students are educated to higher levels than ever before. The school has in place new course sequences based on curriculum frameworks adopted by the California State Board of Education, and the focus is on student outcomes. Everyone in the increasingly diverse student population initially enrolls in the academic foundation, a structured sequence of courses in which all students are prepared to think conceptually, solve complex problems, and communicate their ideas. There is no more assortment of traditional "general education" courses—nor are there remedial courses.

The academic foundation replaces the "shopping mall high school" approach. The academic foundation challenges and supports students to work harder and on more rigorous assignments than previously. It engages students in the learning process so that they are active participants who can apply their knowledge to other areas of learning. The sequence begins in grades six, seven, and eight; and continues at the high school in grades nine and ten. The school is organized in clusters in which students work with their peers and an interdisciplinary team of teachers.

In grades eleven and twelve, students choose an organized program around a special focus that combines academic, applied academic, and field experiences. These program majors can be organized according to themes built around career fields, such as health; or integrated academic disciplines, such as the humanities. Program majors may integrate academic and vocational curricula. Students continue to take a strong core curriculum. Many integrated programs are designed to meet college entrance requirements, while also providing students with career-related technical and practical skills.

Students are not tracked by perceived ability; instead, they select a program based on their own interests and learning styles. Many more students than ever before, particularly students from backgrounds historically underrepresented in higher education, take courses that prepare them for college. In addition, students are not locked into a program, but can move from one program to another if their goals change.

Program majors provide a basis for partnerships among high schools, business and industry, higher education, and the community—all of which contribute to the design and implementation of various majors. Technical preparation programs, such as electronics, engineering, and information technology, are highly sophisticated. These Tech-Prep programs provide a bridge between high school and community college studies.

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Students, in collaboration with adults, develop and revise personal learning plans that provide road maps to postsecondary and career goals. The plans outline challenging, coherent sequences of courses and related learning experiences that prepare students for postsecondary education and work. The plans guide students through the academic foundation and program majors and help monitor progress.

Currently, most comprehensive high schools provide courses and curricula designed to provide something to appeal to every student. Like shopping malls, the schools try to accommodate the varying tastes, interests, and capacities of the consumer (student) by offering a bit of everything. And, like shoppers, students and parents often find it difficult to make sound choices.

Schools provide this variety of courses to attract and hold students, to make them feel successful, and to address the many differences among students. Up until now, there has been little consensus on what constitutes a meaningful or worthwhile curriculum for high school students, except for those who decide on a college preparation course of study. To respond to the diversity among students and the lack of consensus on curriculum, schools offer academic and vocational education, and they offer remedial, nonacademic, and avocational courses.

We have created an economy that seeks literate, technically trained, and committed workers, while simultaneously we produce many young men and women who are semi-literate or functionally illiterate, unable to think critically and untrained in technical skills, hampered by high-risk lifestyles, and alienated from the social mainstream.

—Turning Points: Preparing American Youth for the 21st Century
Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1989

Schools provide various educational choices, but generally they have made decisions for students and their parents based on students' perceived "abilities" and prerequisite performance levels that serve as filters for future options. Other than the prescribed sequence of courses to qualify for college admission and some vocational education curricula that provide specific technical training, most of the high school curricula does not provide a student with viable options for further training or a career upon graduation.

There is now a consensus on a curriculum that is valuable—that teaches every student to think and to learn; to gather, organize, and analyze information; to solve problems; and to work well individually and in teams. It is this curriculum—rather than a remedial education that does not remediate and a general education that is too general—that we should give our students. Every student is engaged in a rigorous sequential curriculum that enables the student to enter the work force or to enroll in postsecondary education.

EVERY STUDENT PARTICIPATES IN THE ACADEMIC FOUNDATION.

All students, during the first two years of high school, participate in a structured sequence of courses that lays a strong academic foundation in language arts, mathematics, history, and science. This academic foundation also provides students with courses in the arts, health and physical education, vocational education, and foreign languages. All students are expected to be successful within this concept-driven curriculum, and students who need additional support to succeed in academic courses or to learn English receive that support. The curriculum that forms the foundation is rigorous and appropriately differentiated to ensure that all students operate at a challenging level. Students have to work harder, but the work is interesting and engaging. Students who meet high performance standards more quickly move on.

A NEW CURRICULUM IS DEVELOPED.

The new high school curriculum differs substantially from the one currently in place; it is not just new courses with new names. Based on the State Board of Education-adopted curriculum frameworks, there are new courses and course sequences within and among academic disciplines. Integration among academic disciplines is a hallmark of the curriculum. This integration can take a variety of shapes—for instance, between math and science; history and English; or history, math, and the arts; and between academic and vocational disciplines, such as in agriculture and science or math and business.

The new curriculum is rigorous and concept-driven, as opposed to solely fact- or skill-based; it is accessible to the broad range of learners. In mathematics, for example, the traditional sequence of math, algebra, geometry, advanced algebra, and trigonometry will gradually be replaced by a new course sequence, Math 1, 2, 3, 4. Concentrating on important and deep mathematical ideas, the math curriculum is composed of eight strands: numbers, measurement, geometry, patterns and functions, statistics and probability, logic and language, algebra, and discrete mathematics. The scope, content, and sequence of the other core disciplines is also being redesigned so that every student can succeed in the full academic curriculum.

> . . . there is general agreement that there is a core body of knowledge and skills that must be learned as a foundation for all other learning.
>
> —Senta Raizen
> *Reforming Education for Work: A Cognitive Science Perspective*
> National Center for Research in Vocational Education, 1989

Students' work often focuses on projects they "construct," using experiences that relate to the world outside school and primary source materials

they select because of the appropriateness and personal connection to their lives. Learning activities include complex concepts that require students to apply skills across subject-matter boundaries and to confront personal and group values related to their learning. In their own work, students see the link between their efforts in the core courses and options available for program majors in grades eleven and twelve that lead to postsecondary study and careers.

Learning takes place when learners regard what one needs to know as relevant to their lives; when they feel that their teachers . . . are committed to the student's success; when the institutional environment allows for differences in learning methods and styles and is in harmony with the diverse needs and interests of the learner.

—*The Forgotten Half: Pathways to Success for America's Youth and Young Families.* The William T. Grant Foundation Commission on Work, Family and Citizenship, 1988

Designing these new courses is an enormous developmental task. Already under way is a portion of the design in English/language arts, mathematics courses 1 and 2, and science courses 1 and 2. Also under way is the design of courses that integrate academic and vocational content.

TEACHERS AND STUDENTS WORK IN CLUSTERS TO SUPPORT STUDENT LEARNING.

To help students feel connected to the school, to offer a more personalized approach to their learning, and to support students and teachers working together on the curriculum, the high school subdivides its student body into clusters or small groups of students and small teams of teachers. The teachers work together to strengthen their own subject areas and to develop a more integrated curriculum. They participate in substantial staff development efforts to achieve these goals.

Because cluster teachers control the scheduling within their cluster, they can arrange special learning opportunities that extend beyond the traditional class period, regroup students frequently for special interest projects, facilitate interdisciplinary units and courses, and quickly adjust to student needs or requests. Arrangements are made for field experiences outside the school that support student learning. Community people, subject area and career experts, and mentors actively participate in cluster activities, frequently acting as primary resources and links to the "adult world" for students' projects.

Working together in small clusters enables teachers and students to get to know and understand each other better. Teachers, working as an interdisciplinary team with common preparation periods, get a better picture of each student's strengths and weaknesses, learning styles, and work habits. In this way, while all students are working on the same curriculum, they may

proceed through it at faster or slower rates, in greater depth, or with different learning approaches; and they may produce work of varying levels of complexity.

PROGRAM MAJORS LEAD TO POSTSECONDARY OPTIONS.

Program majors in grades eleven and twelve continue to build students' knowledge and proficiencies in the academic foundation, but in the context of a unifying theme. While all students continue to take core curriculum courses, such as U.S. history, many of the new program majors have career themes. Some, called Tech-Prep programs, provide integrated technical training which bridges high school and community college studies. Many examples of such focused high school programs already exist in California. The California Partnership Academies are schools-within-schools; teams of academic and technical teachers work together daily and organize instruction around career themes, such as health, electronics, computer applications, and graphic arts.

Other programs have more general themes related to particular community resources. For example, one school has a Space Academy whose major partner is an aeronautics and space company. Whether students in the Space Academy eventually work in the aerospace field is not as important as their opportunity to apply science, math, communication, and technology concepts and skills in a meaningful, adult-world context and to learn many skills applicable to other careers.

In addition, various magnet programs provide certain schools with enriched curricula in the arts, medicine, space science, or engineering—all within a school district or region; and students choose the program that most interests them.

American schools isolate youth from adults and from workplaces and other community settings. Weak links between school and work . . . cloud young people's futures, obscuring their perception of how their current behavior is likely to affect their prospects for the future.

Learning to work means learning to be an adult . . . . Work is a central human function. The capacity to engage in paid employment is a hallmark of adulthood. Being a productive worker calls for many of the same qualities as being an active citizen and a nurturant family member. Fostering young people's growth in one of these adult roles improves their ability to fill the others.

—Stephen F. Hamilton
Apprenticeship for Adulthood: Preparing Youth for the Future
The Free Press, 1989

STUDENTS MAKE CHOICES.

The variety and number of offerings in any school or district are determined by the interests of students, staff, and parents; postsecondary options; career opportunities; cultural institutions; and other community factors. Students can attend any school within their district or another district that

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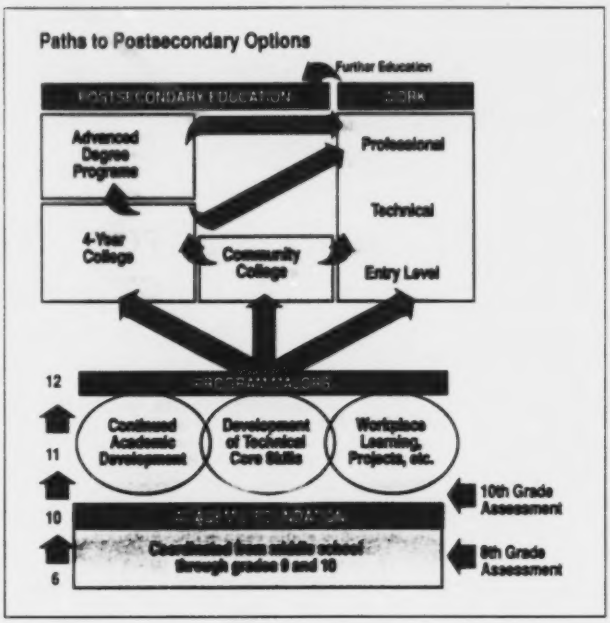
has the program that most closely fits their interests. To provide the personal attention and smaller community atmosphere needed in large schools, most schools enroll fewer than 200 students in each program major.



School and district personnel work with community members to provide connections to the "world beyond school," which make program majors come alive and motivate students to work hard. Program majors are designed cooperatively with regional occupational centers/programs (ROC/P) and community colleges in a 2 + 2 articulated format.

As with the course of study in grades nine and ten, the curricula for the final two years of high school are designed to involve students actively in learning through project development, joint research reports, community interviews, and guided experiments. The theme of the program major facilitates this active learning. Students in a home economics major can conduct, analyze, and report on a survey of their fellow students' nutritional habits. A well-equipped graphic arts program can produce newsletters for school and community use. Students in an information technology program can assist in computer classes elsewhere in their school or in elementary schools.

College-bound students can meet college entrance requirements while attaining useful technical skills. Students interested in entering a career immediately after high school can develop entry-level job skills and also be prepared for postsecondary training in school or on the job. Students interested in the arts or a trade develop their talents and proficiencies in a context which relates to academic and technical training.

MORE STUDENTS THAN EVER BEFORE HAVE ADVANCED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES.

High schools counsel all students, especially those from backgrounds historically underrepresented in higher education, to take courses that will prepare them for admission to a four-year college or university. Student progress is monitored and support is available to ensure student success. The number of students enrolled in honors courses, such as advanced placement,

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is maximized. Within each program major, opportunities are provided for students to accelerate and earn college credit while still in high school. Students also have advanced learning opportunities to pursue topics in greater depth with other students who share common interests, such as through study groups, projects, or "mentorships" with experts in the community.

PROGRAM MAJORS KEEP OPTIONS OPEN.

Each program major includes learning opportunities that prepare students to enter the work force directly, continue their education with a focus on technical preparation, or pursue advanced study at the college or university level. Students are encouraged to pursue the studies which will offer advancement to their highest interest level. For example, a senior planning to continue a Tech-Prep sequence at a community college leading to a health technician job may decide to continue the sequence and be qualified for admission to a registered nursing program in a four-year college.

Students, parents, and school personnel discuss the options, standards, and expectations involved in each specialty. These standards and expectations are developed jointly with community colleges, universities, the community, and employers. This interaction underscores that students' high school coursework has real value for helping them reach personal and career goals.

EVERY STUDENT HAS A PLAN.

Each student, beginning in grade nine, has a plan to help him or her plot a course through the academic foundation and the choices for program majors. The plan encourages the student, and his or her parents, to think about educational and career goals and how best to achieve them.

The plan is not static; it changes as the student progresses and as goals change. It is a flexible blueprint for opening up options; and in this respect, the plan prevents traditional tracking. A student may initially choose to achieve a technical level of preparation in the communications field and later decide on a career in social work requiring a four-year college degree. In working for the first goal, the student meets entrance requirements for college and develops needed competencies. As a result, a student who changes his or her mind does not backtrack but simply switches direction. Since the high school's academic program is structured to facilitate major changes in a student's postsecondary goals, the plan and the process of

developing, revising, and continuously monitoring it become an important way for students to remain on target to accomplish their goals.

The school develops multiple strategies to ensure that timely and accurate information is available as students assess and reassess their educational plan. Some of these strategies include regularly scheduled reviews of the plan, advisement programs, mentoring programs, and parent-school-community partnerships. Students have long-term associations with mentors and counselors who have continuous access to professional development to equip them for this task.

Goals are tied to performance standards that are entry requirements for higher education or employment in specific career areas. Thus, students, together with their parents, teachers, and counselors, can put together personalized programs of courses and learning outcomes that will help them achieve their aspirations. Students are always encouraged and supported to work toward raising their aspirations.

Students start planning for high school while still in the middle grades. High school and district staff work with staff from middle schools to ensure that as early as the sixth grade, students and their parents have sufficient information on high school course sequences, program majors, and postsecondary educational and career opportunities to make informed preliminary decisions regarding a high school plan.

High school students also are informed about requirements for community college, four-year college, and businesses in which they might be interested following graduation.

Two factors stand in the way of producing a highly educated work force: We lack a clear standard of achievement and few students are motivated to work hard in school. One reason that students going right to work after school have little motivation to study hard is that they see little or no relationship between how well they do in school and what kind of job they can get after school. Other advanced industrial nations have stringent performance standards that virtually all students must meet at about age 16 and that directly affect their employment prospects.

—America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages!
National Center on Education and the Economy, 1990

DEVELOPING POWERFUL TEACHING AND LEARNING

Curriculum reform has several important ramifications for teachers. A more demanding course of study does not mean simply having students do more. Teachers have to redesign their courses for higher level student work and use methods that enable more students to succeed at this level, including more facilitation, inquiry, demonstration, and collaborative learning.

In addition, an increasingly diverse mix of students study the same curriculum, a curriculum that engages them in more challenging work than ever before. Historically, it has been relatively easy for high school students to not work hard. The challenge for teachers is to help students learn to think, solve problems, and communicate; and to encourage students' involvement in their own learning. It is not enough for students merely to complete academic assignments and achieve good grades. They need to formulate and solve problems; criticize their own work; work in teams; communicate about what they are doing; and achieve mastery of a topic, skill, or craft. The learning process draws students in, captures their interest, and engages them in their own development.

TEACHERS ARE EFFECTIVE COACHES.

The metaphor of the teacher as coach is central to the idea of powerful teaching. Coaching builds on students' strengths while addressing their weaknesses. Coaching means that every student learns in an active, participatory context rather than a passive one; contributes; is encouraged to succeed; and can excel if expectations are kept high. A teacher as coach conceptualizes the job as making sure that *all* students learn the curriculum, instead of thinking of the job as presenting the material and leaving it up to the students to understand it. The cornerstone of coaching is that the student and teacher are engaged in an interactive relationship to learn together—instead of the traditional one in which the teacher imparts wisdom to the student.

Coaching currently takes place most often in extracurricular activities, such as drama, athletics, and interscholastic debate competition. Teachers in these activities are not solely sources of information and approval; they also

act as catalysts, facilitators, and chief questioners. Teachers as academic and intellectual coaches use their knowledge to guide students' learning, rather than merely giving students information to recall.

Just as a coach and a player may develop a special, personal relationship that differs from student to student, so does the teacher, tailoring feedback and guidance to the individual. The teacher as coach works with the whole class but usually interacts with clusters of students working on the same project or unit or with individuals.

Powerful learning is linked to standards. Students know beforehand the standard that they must attain for each area of study. The teacher supports the students in achieving the standard. Some students meet the standard quickly and easily; others need more time and find the job much harder. Students continue to work and revise their work until it is complete.

STUDENTS COLLABORATE AS ACTIVE LEARNERS.

Another component of powerful learning is collaboration. Students need to be active learners supported by teachers as coaches. Student collaboration is often the key ingredient in creating active learning.

Individuals frequently do not work in isolation in the workplace as students most often do in schools. Instead, employees are encouraged to seek information from others, ask for feedback from colleagues, and work together. Students need to develop these same interactional skills during the learning process, because that is how they often will work in life.

Collaboration is enjoyable. It is much more desirable to work and struggle with others than to struggle alone. Working with others helps students feel they are part of a community of learners where everyone shares from each other's success. In this setting, teachers model collaboration as they become learners and share their own discoveries with students. Parents also participate in this learning process.

At the same time, students also have to do individual work and have personal responsibility for specific projects or parts of projects, and teachers are still able to judge individual performance. Students are generally grouped heterogeneously, although some special circumstances call for

> Schools that always insist on the right answer, with no concern as to how a student reaches it, smother the student's efforts to become an effective intuitive thinker. A person who is groping to understand, and is on a fruitful but somewhat misdirected track, needs to learn how to redirect his thoughts and to try a parallel but somewhat different scheme. Simply telling that person that he is wrong throws away the opportunity to engage him in questions about his logic and approach. Well-directed questions by teachers can promote ever more effective intuition, albeit often by a process that is difficult to ascertain. Nonetheless, like aspirin, whose precise functioning we do not understand, it works.
>
> —Theodore R. Sizer
> *Horace's Compromise: The Dilemma of the American High School*
> Houghton Mifflin, 1984

specialized grouping. At no time are students held back; they are encouraged to go as far and as fast as they can.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS AND TECHNOLOGY ARE BETTER UTILIZED.

Textbooks can be important sources of information that illustrate key curricular concepts and themes. In many classrooms, however, these books are merely the source of a myriad of isolated facts to be memorized. For powerful teaching and learning to occur and for academic work to be real and engage students, they have to go beyond the bounds of textbooks.

In a rapidly changing world, teachers model the intellectual curiosity that moves students to seek the most accurate and up-to-date information. Students are challenged to use resources beyond those in the classroom.

Students cannot access the richer curriculum without the use of technology. Too often, instructional technology and textbooks have been used to support outdated instructional strategies. Powerful learning requires that technology be used in new ways. New computer and video-based materials offer the great potential of helping students inquire about important themes. One new use of technology is to connect students with databases, information sources housed both within and outside the school. Students are not bound by the limits of outdated textbooks.

Our studies indicated that students were more engaged, when they were expected to be active interpreters of knowledge, rather than passive listeners, and when they were involved in in-depth study rather than superficial coverage of information. Unfortunately, this kind of instruction rarely occurs.

—Fred M. Newmann
Final Report, National Center on Effective Secondary Schools
Wisconsin Center for Education Research,1991

Another use of technology is to help students move more quickly to key themes and ideas. Students can examine and analyze results, deal with multiple variables, and thus apply important concepts more effectively and in more ways. In a science laboratory, students taught to build a database for science projects are much more discerning about information and can see better connections to the world beyond the school than they would without the technology. In a history class, many examples of cultural tolerance can be retrieved and analyzed to see common themes and dilemmas.

Technology use also enhances students' verbal and computational capabilities. For example, students who have access to word processing in an English class improve their writing fluency and decrease their grammatical errors. They are more likely to revise, rather than simply recopy, their writing. Data that would have taken weeks to collect and organize with paper and pencil methods are now summarized and manipulated in minutes by students with computers.

3 ESTABLISHING A COMPREHENSIVE ACCOUNTABILITY AND ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

The high school has a comprehensive accountability system featuring assessment based on student performance that is relevant to a student's future success and motivation. This accountability system allows the high school to determine how well it is meeting students' educational needs. Student assessment is continual and integrated in the learning process; it emphasizes performance and application of knowledge. The new system measures a student's ability to analyze, evaluate, and communicate. Results are used by teachers to plan appropriate and challenging learning activities for students, and by colleges and employers as indicators of successful preparation for advanced study or work.

Each student has a graduation portfolio which contains various assessment measures, including work samples in all core disciplines, awards, a standardized high school transcript, a performance-based diploma, and statements about what the student has learned. College representatives and employers also use the portfolio to provide a comprehensive picture of the quality of the student's preparation.

High school reform is focused on student performance—learning outcomes that reflect actual achievement and application of knowledge—not merely simple recitation of facts and information. Students learn problem-solving techniques and how to apply them in real-life situations.

Assessment, at all levels, is seen as the key strategy in bringing about significant educational reform. It gives educators more tools to evaluate the quality of learning—and then make necessary adjustments. Moving beyond the standardized, multiple-choice test as the primary accountability tool, the new approach to assessment helps educators measure what matters—including a student's ability to analyze, organize, interpret, explain, synthesize, evaluate, and communicate important experiences. These attributes are developed, encouraged, and expanded with the support of a meaningful assessment system.

SCHOOLS CONTINUOUSLY ASSESS STUDENT PROGRESS.

High schools continuously assess how well they are meeting their students' educational needs. Assessment provides a means to monitor students' progress in attaining the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary to attain their goals. Old ways of measuring student success (e.g., current standardized tests) do not adequately assess what students have to know to be successful in our world of intense international competition. Standards are grounded in applications that extend beyond school and are set in partnership with business and postsecondary educational institutions to ensure compatibility with entry-level requirements. Specific standards are set in each curricular area, program, course, and instructional unit within courses.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT IS OUTCOME-BASED.

An outcome-based program means that the teacher and student work a partners to reach recognized levels of performance and that curriculum and instruction are organized to produce such results. For this to happen, there is a common agreement on performance standards in reading, writing, math, science, the arts, physical education, and foreign language, as well as additional standards for vocational/technical courses. Schools may also focus on standards linked directly to citizenship. It is extremely important that all teachers develop a common understanding of what various levels of student work look like, much as Olympic judges have developed a common understanding of what it means to get a 6.0 in figure skating.

The experience gained in training teachers in eighth grade writing standards has shown that developing this common understanding requires significant investment of resources and time. This understanding is one of the most powerful tools to improve student performance. When both students and teachers have a vision of what composes quality work, it is easier to form partnerships to assist students in producing such work. The results of performance measures, standards, and goals are regularly reviewed by teachers, parents, and business and community representatives. Students realize their performance is closely tied with preparedness for job placement and postsecondary training. Students see a clear relationship between what they are doing in school and their future educational and career goals. The link between success in and beyond high school is apparent and serves to motivate students.

Teacher-developed assessments are primarily based on student performance and may include examinations, assignments, portfolios, and qualitative evaluations of student performance. Assessment tasks are used to measure how well a student applies knowledge and skills to new situations. These tasks are embedded in the instructional unit and are designed to stimulate thinking in new ways; therefore, learning actually occurs during assessment. When students do not meet performance standards, they receive special assistance; and teaching techniques are modified to benefit all students.

> What are the actual performances that we want students to be good at that represent model challenges? Design them by department, by school, and by district—and worry about a fair, efficient, and objective method of grading them as a *secondary* problem. Do we judge our students to be deficient in writing, speaking, listening, artistic creation, research, thoughtful analysis, problem posing, and problem solving? Let the test ask them to write, speak, listen, create, do original research, analyze, pose, and solve problems.
>
> —Grant Wiggins
> "Teaching to the (Authentic) Test"
> *Educational Leadership*, April, 1989

The California Department of Education also contributes to student assessment by providing individual pupil assessment data on the State Board of Education-designated *High School Performance Test*, which students take for the first time at the end of grade ten. These data provide feedback on how well the curriculum in grades nine and ten promotes student performance. The test is a diagnostic, rather than a screening mechanism. Students are encouraged to take the *Performance Test* again in grade eleven or twelve to demonstrate higher levels of performance needed to meet entrance standards for employment or postsecondary education.

SCHOOLS COMPILE GRADUATION PORTFOLIOS.

Students are better served by these new methods of assessing and monitoring progress. The school gathers assessment information about each student and places it in a graduation portfolio. The graduation portfolio reflects real effort and learning. It includes examples and records of what a student knows and can do. The school uses the portfolio in deciding whether each student has met the high standards for graduation. The portfolio is used in postsecondary job placement or to gain entry into programs for further education. Future employers or postsecondary educators can look at the student's transcript and get a good picture of the student's overall abilities—unlike current transcripts that rarely are used in any meaningful way, except for college admission. In addition to the student's transcript, data on tests, and certificate and award information, the portfolio contains: work samples which are selected by teachers and the student; statements from teachers,

parents, and the student about what the student has learned; a senior project; and other indicators of personal responsibility. The portfolio gives an in-depth picture of each student's high school career.

> . . . high-school grades often have little meaning. As very few employers scrutinize high-school transcripts when making hiring decisions, what compels students to do more than the minimum required to obtain a passing grade? What motivates a student to work hard in school? . . . To establish an achievement certification system that can organize academic effort and communicate clearly to the public and to employers what students have accomplished, we need to determine what students ought to know and be able to do when they leave school and then arrange to directly examine students' command of that knowledge or skill.
>
> —*America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages!*
> National Center on Education and the Economy, 1990

THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SCHOOLS SET TARGETS.

The California Department of Education's accountability reports, based on aggregated individual student data, are used to set performance and improvement targets at the school. The goals reflect the school's commitment to be held accountable for its students' educational progress. Schools also set targets for subgroups (e.g., limited-English-proficient students) to evaluate their progress and institute curricular, program, or school changes, when necessary. Teachers help students shape—and then attain—their individual goals.

School-level accountability includes outcome measures, such as percent of students meeting performance standards, completing a technical preparation sequence, and completing a–f course requirements for admission to the University of California. If targets are not met, the school investigates why not and implements modifications to improve student performance.

THE ADMINISTRATION SUPPORTS ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES.

The school and district administrations provide staff development and resources to support teachers' assessment activities. Assessment meetings are scheduled regularly to provide a forum for teachers to examine student work, discuss effective practices, and revise curricular plans as needed.

4

PROVIDING COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT FOR ALL STUDENTS, INCLUDING LANGUAGE-MINORITY STUDENTS AND THOSE AT RISK OF FAILURE

Integrated student support is an intrinsic part of what the school does, not a separate collection of add-on services or programs. Support is so integrated that it is often transparent; students are neither stigmatized nor made to feel somehow different from or less able than any of their peers. The concept of support encompasses the notion that all students can learn and that a diverse student body has diverse needs for support. Faculty and staff are much more proactive than ever before in supporting student success and have developed structures and groupings, such as student study teams, which determine how to assist students at the first sign of problems.

School also becomes a place where multiple options are available—from those that bolster academic and classroom achievement to those that address social, psychological, or health needs. The school is the hub of a coordinated network that includes local, state, and federal agencies; health services; youth and family support organizations; businesses; and the philanthropic sector. Students are connected to the school and, thus, to a wide range of integrated services that can assist them in reaching their goals.

Students from non-English-speaking backgrounds receive support that enables them to acquire English fully; attain higher order thinking skills; meet graduation requirements; and enter college, university, or the work force. Language-minority students take a varied sequence of courses and have related learning experiences that are equivalent in scope, content, and quality to the core curriculum offered to native English speakers.

Students are coming to our schools with more problems than ever before, including drug and alcohol abuse and teen pregnancy. Many students are underprepared to learn because they live in poverty. Others have not received the academic skills or language instruction necessary to master

successfully the more rigorous curriculum. Some feel detached from the school. As a result, too many students either lose interest in school or drop out altogether.

STUDENT SUPPORT IS AN INTRINSIC PART OF THE SCHOOL.

Student support becomes an intrinsic part of the school. It is not viewed as an add-on service provided only to those who need assistance to remain part of the mainstream. Everyone is considered part of the mainstream; everyone has the expectation that he or she will succeed. The school recognizes that all students may need one form of support or another and that these individual needs will be met.

Each student feels connected to a group of students and to a faculty team. In large high schools, students may be grouped in smaller organizational units so that student-to-student and student-to-teacher interactions are manageable. Students are connected to one adult who becomes their main contact for guidance and support. By getting to know fewer students in more depth, teachers can work together to address problems and concerns quickly to ensure student success.

Extracurricular activities also provide support and connect students to the school. These activities offer an additional opportunity for students to feel part of a group and relate closely to faculty. The activities are inclusive rather than exclusive and seek to link large numbers of students to the school. For example, the school develops innovative ways to allow as many students as possible to participate on teams and spirit squads and in theatrical and musical performances.

> Every student must be able to rely on a small, caring group of adults who work closely with each other to provide coordinated, meaningful, and challenging educational experiences. In turn, teachers must have the opportunity to get to know every one of their students well enough to understand and teach them as individuals . . . .
>
> . . . every student needs at least one thoughtful adult who has the time and takes the trouble to talk with the student about academic matters, personal problems, and the importance of performing well . . . .
>
> —*Turning Points: Preparing American Youth for the 21st Century*
> Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1989

STUDENTS RECEIVE INDIVIDUAL ATTENTION.

Higher expectations for students are accompanied by more individual attention, strong teacher involvement, and learning opportunities before and after school. The school embraces the notion of early intervention through continuously monitoring student progress. An ongoing plan provides additional support for students needing more time, encouragement, or instruction. The school day may be extended; summer or Saturday

enrichment programs are offered; and specialized daily instruction is provided. This support is not remedial but is offered within a context of enriched opportunities for learning that builds on each student's strengths. It is based on the concept that, while all students can learn, some students may need more assistance in one area than another.

Support such as tutoring and counseling; training in time management, note taking, report writing, analysis, written expression, and critical thinking; adaptation of the physical environment; and learning techniques, such as cooperative study groups and the inquiry method, are considered a normal part of the help that a high school offers to all students. Prevention is at the heart of this assistance. All students receive help in their personal, social, educational, and career development. Student support is proactive and positive, not remedial or indicative of failure; and it is integrated in the regular coursework. No stigma is attached to receiving or asking for support.

THE SCHOOL IS PART OF A NETWORK OF COMMUNITY SERVICES.

Support is multifaceted. It may consist of interventions designed to sustain or improve academic success, as well as coordination with social service agencies that address students' social, health, or psychological problems that impair learning. The school is at the center of a network of community services that include local government, health services, youth-serving organizations, private businesses, and philanthropies. This network engages in joint problem solving and resource sharing. Staff is knowledgeable about the social agencies and programs available to students and their families. The school is the focal point to access support and resources provided by the different organizations and agencies. Specific faculty members are experts in identifying the various resources and connecting students to them.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT CONNECTS TO THE REGULAR PROGRAM.

Educators, parents, and students learned the hard way that traditional academic support services actually made a problem worse if they resulted in having students pulled out of the core curriculum and consigned to a dead-end educational future.

In the new high school, academic support is not designed to provide an alternative curriculum. Rather, it gives students alternative instructional means to access the same curriculum and become successful members of the high school community. Support, whether provided through redirection of existing resources, community groups, categorical programs, or educational

options, is connected to the regular school program and is part of the high school's overall plan.

Undoubtedly, changes in the high school which engage the learner and personalize the learning experience will help each student. Nevertheless, students who begin high school academically underprepared or with special needs may need extra help. School districts identify these students and create a plan that provides the resources to help the students connect to the school. Decisions regarding appropriate support are made with the involvement of teachers and other staff who have knowledge about the students.

The idea of a defined plan for students who need extra support is grounded in the belief that all students can learn; however, they may learn at different rates and in different ways. It is further complicated because of the huge diversity in students needing assistance, lack of a meaningful evaluation of why students are underprepared, lack of a clear support curriculum, fragmentation of supplemental services, and inadequate resources.

THE HIGH SCHOOL IS RESPONSIBLE FOR STUDENTS' SUCCESS.

Tying together supplemental services for students requires someone to take charge of the student's plan and performance, regardless of where the instruction is provided. The comprehensive high school assumes this role. High schools are also ultimately held accountable for whether or not students reach learning outcomes. When the student is referred to off-campus supplemental programs, the comprehensive high school is not relieved from the responsibility for that student's success. For example, tenth grade assessment program results for students in supplemental programs are combined with the scores of students served directly by the comprehensive school. High school performance reports include data from supplemental programs, including dropout and course enrollment data, as well as data from the comprehensive school.

Districts and high schools have various resources to support students. Many districts have categorical programs (e.g., Chapter 1, Economic Impact Aid, and special education). Most districts operate programs which provide off-campus settings, such as continuation high schools and adult education via concurrent enrollment. These programs are held to the same Western Association of Schools and Colleges' accreditation criteria and district high school graduation requirements as comprehensive schools are.

Many districts offer support in the form of optional instructional strategies, such as independent study, summer school, Saturday schools, after-school tutoring, dropout prevention programs, and mentors. The use of

an optional strategy for delivering instruction never means that the curriculum's substance and quality are compromised. Rather, students have the same responsibility to study the full core curriculum—complete in length and content. High expectations, standards, and procedures to ensure accountability are in place for all students. By the same token, there is an equivalent responsibility to students participating in alternative instructional settings, which ensures that all graduates are well prepared to continue with academic or technical studies beyond high school, or have basic employability skills, or both.

STRONGER STUDENT ASSESSMENT IS CRUCIAL.

Students are underprepared when they enter high school for many reasons. Some need just a little help, while others are far behind. Some students are recent immigrants who lack English language skills or a formal educational background; some have been tracked into remedial or low-level classes and lack basic reading, writing, and computational skills; some have very low motivation to do schoolwork; some are saddled with severe family problems; and some are "turned off" by the traditional high school setting and do not function well there.

Too often, assessment of students' readiness for the high school curriculum has been weak and haphazard. Sometimes records do not accompany a student and arrive weeks or even months late; often, the only data on a student's prior performance are scores on narrow, standardized achievement tests. Frequently, school staff do not have adequate time to interview students and, if necessary, their families to assess nonacademic needs. In many cases, it is unclear who should do the assessment, to whom the findings should be reported, and what should be done with that information. A much stronger system for developing profiles of students' prior performance, learning experiences, and individual needs is crucial to designing effective, personalized programs.

CAREFULLY DESIGNED "ENABLER" COURSES HELP STUDENTS GAIN KEY SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE.

Designing courses to increase the skill levels of students who are underprepared is tricky. "Skill and drill" activities fail because they (1) often turn off students who have seen similar remedial curricula many times before; (2) provide skill practice but do not contribute to understanding and application of concepts; and (3) are often slowly paced. Rather than progressing, students stuck in remedial programs fall further behind.

On the other hand, materials that are far too difficult risk frustrating otherwise motivated students. What is needed are carefully designed "enabler" courses. These courses help students gain the key skills and knowledge which will assist them in making expected progress in the regular curriculum. Math A is a good example of an enabler course. It does not recycle a computation-based curriculum—it introduces the concepts needed for success in the first level high school math course.

A QUALITY CURRICULUM AND SUPPORT ARE PROVIDED FOR LANGUAGE-MINORITY STUDENTS.

Traditional high school programs for students from non-English-language backgrounds stress remediation and are generally compensatory in nature. Program participants are often stigmatized as underachievers and receive little support. Even when offered, special classes for new English learners may be so poor in quality or so few in number that it is almost impossible for such students to progress normally through high school. To ensure that every student with a non-English background participates fully in a concept-driven curriculum, the students' needs are considered, along with those of native English speakers, as the faculty plans and implements activities.

In planning a sequence of courses and related learning experiences, language-minority students and their parents are assisted in determining what coursework will be required. The students are directed toward the appropriate beginning, intermediate, or advanced English-as-a-second-language class. Equally important, students are counseled and receive help identifying classes required for graduation, transfer to colleges and universities, or job placement. Their parents have opportunities for learning about the high school system and strategies supporting their children's education.

Instruction in the academic foundation or the program majors provides language-minority students with full access to course content. The students' primary language is used as a powerful learning tool. If significant numbers of students are from the same language group, instruction is in that particular language. Team teaching promotes the best use of bilingual teachers and language development specialists.

If several language groups are represented with fewer students in each group, specially designed subject-matter instruction in English, such as sheltered techniques along with primary language support, provides access to the core curriculum. In sheltered instruction, teaching strategies in English help language-minority students learn academic content. Teachers use various methods, such as visual aids and short presentations of content

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followed by student interaction, to check for comprehension and provide necessary explanation, thus reducing the impact of limited-English fluency on the students' understanding of the material. Primary language support through materials and tutoring also helps make the English instruction understandable to the new English learners.

Content-area course sections in which language-minority students are enrolled are taught through the primary language or sheltered English methods. These strategies together ensure that all course content required for grade level promotion, graduation, and participation in higher education or the work force is geared to the needs of new English learners. Students' transition to full English fluency is gradual, varying with the individual and the support provided.

The high school's accountability and assessment systems include specific features regarding language-minority students. A measure of the school's success is the degree to which language-minority students develop English fluency and progress, regardless of English fluency, in the academic foundation and program majors. The faculty has the same high expectations for new English learners as it has for native English speakers. The time frame to reach performance standards for recent immigrants who are entering California high schools may have to be adjusted.

As language-minority students develop greater English proficiency, they increasingly can handle the academic demands of classes taught in English. Formal and informal assessments determine the need for English-as-a-second language, primary language, and sheltered instruction.

THE HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY PROVIDES EXTRA INSTRUCTIONAL TIME.

The entire high school community, including the school district, the state, and community and business groups, develop and support ways to provide pupils extra, flexible instructional time if they need it. Strategies include evening classes, Saturday classes, after-school tutoring, and summer school.

Much of the responsibility for providing this time lies at the state level, which reviews its restrictions on programs, such as independent study, concurrent enrollment in adult education, and summer school. Some of the answer also rests locally, where schools use categorical and supplemental programs more creatively—not to serve the student exclusively or permanently outside the regular program, but to provide extra help to get the student back into the school day in a meaningful way. Finally, assistance outside the traditional school day is a natural way that business and community groups can help students and show that they value education.

RESTRUCTURING THE SCHOOL

5

In organizational structure is designed that facilitates the school's task of reaching its learning goals. The school community redefines how it conducts its business. It reconsiders the way people interact; the relationship of a high school to the outside world; and how resources, including people, time, and money, are used. While specific approaches vary among schools, the elements can include: changes in the master schedule and flexible uses of time, such as Saturday classes; variable teaming of teachers for curricular units; reducing the number of students a teacher sees in a day; and students clustered in small learning teams or in organized programs that support personalized learning.

SCHOOLS MAKE MAJOR CHANGES IN THEIR ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES.

Just as the educational environment for students changes because of new demands in curriculum, instruction, and assessment, so too does the environment for teachers and administrators. Their roles in planning, facilitating, and assessing a student-centered curriculum require new ways of working together. The school's organizational structure also is shaped in different and more flexible configurations to support new student learning outcomes and new faculty expectations. Major changes in organizational structure are needed, particularly to bond students and faculty. Different high schools find different ways to make these adjustments.

Elements are restructured together. For example, changing teaching assignments, groupings of students, budget categories, and the use of school facilities requires changes in the master schedule. In many ways, the master schedule more directly reflects a high school's philosophy than does its written mission statement. A master schedule reveals a school's real priorities and how inevitable trade-offs among competing goals are resolved.

Several important elements of restructuring include providing:

- ***Flexible use of time controlled by an interdisciplinary team of teachers.*** The schedule provides the teachers working with a group of students the time blocks needed to accomplish various objectives. The schedule is flexible, driven by the competing demands of the curriculum, and decided by the teaching team. In addition, students have alternative

ways to demonstrate attainment of high peformance standards, and those who meet these standards quickly are encouraged to move on.

- ***Longer blocks of time for student work.*** Blocks of time differ, based on the nature of the instructional tasks. The current 50-minute class typically is not long enough for students to solve complex problems, compose effective writing, or design projects that measure real progress.

Inside and out, schools today look very much the way they did a hundred years ago . . . . Yet the world has changed remarkably . . . . From inside a school, however, one would hardly know that visual images, rapid motion, technology, and change are pervasive in the world outside.

The nation's public school system faces the challenge of revamping and reorganizing itself to prepare students to function productively in today's society. Creating more demanding goals for all students and providing curriculum and instruction that stimulate thinking and problem solving will require a total restructuring of the education system from top to bottom. All parts of the system must change so that all students, teachers, and administrators can take on and accomplish these more complex tasks.

—Jane L. David, "Restructuring and Technology: Partners in Change" *Phi Delta Kappan,* September,1991

- ***Time for emphasizing the academic foundation in grades nine and ten.*** Time is provided for personalized instruction and support that help students do well in the academic foundation. Because time is limited, this emphasis may curtail electives, extracurricular activities, and sports during the school day and may require more participation before or after school.
- ***A longer school day, week, and year.*** Scheduling a longer school day (for example, from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m) or a longer week (Saturday classes) makes the school a learning center for the entire community, including working students and parents. Students in grades eleven and twelve can take the high school's program in the morning or afternoon, while they also take advanced courses at colleges and universities; or participate in internships or other fieldwork with business, industry, schools, and private and public community organizations. The school year can be extended by creating intersessions that allow additional time for student support or faculty planning.

SCHOOLS REDUCE THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS A TEACHER SEES IN A DAY.

High schools reduce the number of students that a teacher sees in a day. The traditional instructional environment limits opportunities for substantial conversation between teacher and student and for coaching, cooperative learning, personalized instruction, or any personal or social support.

A lower student-teacher ratio can be achieved by reorganizing scheduling to allow teachers longer blocks of time, to share a "core" unit with other

teachers, or to teach an "integrated" block like English and social studies. For the same per-pupil expenditures, the number of students that a teacher sees in a day can be lowered to fewer than 100 students. These solutions do not reduce overall class size, which is also a desirable goal. They do, however, allow more extensive daily student-teacher interaction.

FACILITIES ARE ORGANIZED BY CLUSTERS.

The use of the physical facilities may change in the new high school. For example, schools currently tend to have all science classrooms located in the same area, all math classes in another area, and so on. One approach to providing the academic foundation and personalization is to have a cluster located in one area or building. The cluster provides the personalized physical setting needed to improve attendance and discipline. Students and teachers in each cluster have access to technology and instructional support.

A good school is the special creation of its own faculty—its teachers, counselors, and administrators . . . . A school has character if its key faculty . . . feel collective responsibility for it, take its standards and its style seriously, and protect its reputation.

Such a commitment arises only when a faculty feels a sense of authority and control over its own school. Thus, just as a good school properly reflects its community, so too does it particularly show, and boldly, the convictions of its central staff, convictions that carry the authority of people who know that the school's reputation rests squarely on their judgement and strength.

—Theodore R. Sizer
"No Pain, No Gain", *Educational Leadership*, May, 1991

6 CREATING NEW PROFESSIONAL ROLES

The success of high school reform hinges on the ability and willingness of classroom teachers and school administrators to implement necessary reforms. District office administrators and school board members support and collaborate with site administrators, teachers, counselors, and classified and other staff to create an environment of professionalism, while bureaucratic impediments that reduce staffs' effectiveness and professional discretion are eliminated. Teachers are given support, time, and staff development so that they can increase their knowledge and expand their skills. Teachers ensure that students not only acquire skills and knowledge but also independence, creativity, a sense of values, and the ability to exhibit these outcomes outside the school.

Establishing an environment of professionalism means encouraging and supporting experimentation, ingenuity, and innovation; it means having a sense of common purpose and dedication, not merely focusing on increasing technical proficiency. Faculty and staff expertise are built upon. Time and the opportunity for learning, questioning, and meeting with others are provided. Those charged with implementing reforms are free to offer input and design their own approach to change, and the entire educational community plays a role.

AN ENVIRONMENT OF PROFESSIONALISM IS ESTABLISHED.

Teachers build on their current knowledge and strategies to move from merely transferring information to students to presenting the subject in ways that guide students to a deeper understanding and that require them to have greater thinking and reasoning skills. This task will be especially difficult because students have diverse learning styles.

TEACHERS HAVE THE TIME AND SUPPORT TO IMPLEMENT CHANGE.

If teachers are expected to change their roles and expand their responsibilities, they must have the latitude to help define these new roles and responsibilities. They must have the time and support to implement these changes. A cornerstone of establishing an environment of professionalism is to build on the expertise of teachers while nurturing an atmosphere that encourages risk taking and experimentation. Teachers have the time to work through problems

and be creative. They receive training and staff development, and they have the opportunity to struggle together with their peers, developing an on-site support system.

Teachers' inherent isolation in the classroom is overcome as they are encouraged to meet with teachers at other schools and districts to learn about the many resources, strategies, and new ideas that are available and to share information about successes and setbacks. An atmosphere of collegiality, not competition or censure, is nurtured.

As teachers try out new ideas, the pace of innovation is gradual and varies among teachers. For most teachers, it means expanding their current practices—shifting into uncharted waters as they move from focusing only on what students must know to what students must know, understand, and be able to do.

Teachers work with their colleagues and administrators in different ways. They collaborate and work together more on solving problems of teaching and learning. Teachers review student work together and analyze their evaluations of student progress. Because their activities are site-based and ongoing, teachers receive appropriate, friendly, and continuous pressure and support to try new things. They are motivated to change because they evaluate their own performances against successful practices that they learn from their colleagues.

Because real education improvement happens school by school, the teachers, principals, and parents in each school must be given the authority—and the responsibility—to make important decisions about how the school will operate. Federal and state red tape that gets in the way needs to be cut. States will be encouraged to allow the leadership of individual schools to make decisions about how resources are used, and Congress will be asked to enact Education Flexibility legislation to remove federal constraints that impede the ability of states to spend education resources most effectively to raise achievement levels.

—America 2000: An Education Strategy
United States Department of Education, 1991

THE CONCEPT OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT IS BROADENED.

The concept of staff development is broadened to mean more than training; it becomes a vehicle for professional growth and renewal. For instance, participating in collegial support teams, classroom research projects, and curriculum development contributes to a teacher's effectiveness. Organizing study groups around issues or professional readings can bring new ideas into practice. Observing other teachers and having time to talk about classroom practices help teachers feel more comfortable with new methods or curriculum. Serving on school, district, or state committees helps to broaden a teacher's perspective as a professional educator. Serving as a California Subject Matter Project fellow leading peers in professional development activities provides excellent teachers with the stimulus needed for continuous professional growth.

THE DISTRICT OFFICE CHANGES ITS ROLE.

The district office undergoes a philosophical change in its role and approach. Its primary function is one of assistance and facilitation, not monitoring. The district office strives for a service orientation toward schools and creativeness to make change happen.

SCHOOL STAFF HAS MORE CONTROL OVER RESOURCES.

School staff has more control over its resources to support the new curriculum and student goals. Budget authority and decision making are decentralized so that most budget decisions are made at the school. All stakeholders have the opportunity to participate in the governance process, which focuses on improving teaching and learning. The budget process provides meaningful choices; flexibility; and the maximum opportunity for success within state law, court orders, and district policies. The school staff is accountable for using resources to improve program effectiveness as evidenced by increased student success.

THE ENTIRE EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY IS INVOLVED.

An atmosphere of professionalism is encouraged by the recognition that personal and individual growth is important to increasing the organization's effectiveness. Improvement, learning, growth, experimentation, and risk taking become organizational norms. Teachers, administrators, classified staff, school board members, and parents all play a role in this process. For example, as decision making becomes a more shared responsibility, principals assume a greater role in providing instructional leadership. Counselors can help coordinate and facilitate teams that are responsible for providing student support and assisting students through their curricular paths. School boards, in addition to guiding and evaluating change efforts, provide support for teachers and principals. Parents are encouraged to participate in decision making.

Any improvement worth pursuing requires an investment of management time, teacher time, and school district money and other physical resources. Those charged with designing and carrying out the improvement need time to think together, a place to do it, relevant information, and so on.

—Jerome M. Rosow and Robert Zager, with Jill-Casner-Lotto and Associates. *Allies in Educational Reform: How Teachers, Unions, and Administrators Can Join Forces for Better Schools*
Jossey-Bass, 1988

CHARTING A COURSE FOR REFORM

This document is just the beginning of a sustained effort to assist and support educators, parents, students, and others who embark on the difficult, yet critical, task of creating the new California high school. A variety of documents, briefing papers, staff development opportunities, and videos will follow in the coming months. Also, a new unit, the High School Education Office, has been created within the California Department of Education to help foster change in schools.

BEGINNING THE DISCUSSION

Ten regional conferences were held immediately following the initial publication and dissemination of *Second to None*. The purpose of these conferences was to focus attention on the report's major themes and have educators discuss the implications these ideas have for their particular schools. High School Task Force members and California Department of Education staff will make additional overview presentations throughout the state.

BRINGING SCHOOLS TOGETHER

Schools themselves are the catalysts for change. School personnel need the opportunity to meet together to explore and discuss the ideas of reform and form networks with other schools and districts that are rethinking how high schools should operate. Seminars, forums, conferences, and symposia will be developed to provide this opportunity to exchange information and ideas and to learn about new or emerging best practices. All of these activities will come about through regional partnerships among school and district teams, High School Task Force members, county offices of education, Senate Bill 1882 Resource Agencies or Consortia, the California School Leadership Academy, the California Subject Matter Projects, and the California Department of Education.

DEVELOPING SUPPORT MATERIALS

Developmental work will continue on curriculum frameworks, new course sequences, integration of vocational and academic curricula, and career paths that build on the concepts outlined in this report. Briefing papers for specific audiences, including school board members, parents, and administrators, will be published. Other documents will address specific issues in school reform, such as establishing clusters, developing program majors, and exploring new ways to use existing resources. Publications will also be prepared on key policy issues, including aligning the new high school curriculum and college admissions requirements, discretionary funding for high school reforms, and credentialing issues.

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